

House Bill 1376

By: Representatives Day of the 163<sup>rd</sup>, Stephens of the 164<sup>th</sup>, Bryant of the 160<sup>th</sup>, Stephens of the 161<sup>st</sup>, Gordon of the 162<sup>nd</sup>, and others

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
AN ACT

To amend Chapter 4 of Title 1 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to holidays and observances, so as to establish "Irish Heritage and History Month"; to provide for legislative findings; to encourage observances and celebrations of "Irish Heritage and History Month"; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

**SECTION 1.**

Chapter 4 of Title 1 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to holidays and observances, is amended by adding a new Code section to read as follows:

"1-4-21.

(a) The General Assembly hereby finds and determines that:

(1) March 17 is the day designated to celebrate the wearing of green and the history of the beloved patron saint of Ireland, Saint Patrick;

(2) Starting with Saint Patrick's Day, the month of March has evolved into a celebration of all things Irish and provides an opportunity to celebrate the hardy character, the rich cultural heritage, and the many valuable contributions of Irish-Americans;

(3) Irish culture has been spread throughout Georgia due to the many thousands of Irish immigrants who, for more than 200 years, have come and made Georgia their home;

(4) By 1776, the year that began the history of our republic, some 300,000 Irish citizens had emigrated to the United States and many of these courageous individuals played crucial roles in America's War for Independence. Nine of the men who signed the Declaration of Independence were of Irish origin;

(5) Throughout the arts, education, government, business, science, and agriculture, talented men and women of Irish descent continue to merit the honor we give to them and to their ancestors;

(6) The countless annual Saint Patrick's Day parades held throughout the United States, and most notably Savannah Georgia's annual Saint Patrick's Day parade and celebration which is one of the largest in the nation, all attest to the continued vigor of Irish-American heritage; and

(7) It is fitting and appropriate that all Georgians reflect upon our state's Irish history and respect the tremendous heritage that has contributed so much to our culture and freedom.

(b) The month of March of each year is hereby designated as 'Irish History and Heritage Month,' and shall be set aside to honor, observe, and celebrate the influence of Irish culture in our history.

(c) Officials and departments of state, county, and municipal governments, boards of education, elementary and secondary schools, colleges and universities, businesses, and all citizens are encouraged to participate in programs, displays, and activities that commemorate and honor our shared history and cultural inheritance throughout each March during 'Irish History and Heritage Month.'"

## **SECTION 2.**

All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.